

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application in view of the present amendment and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 13, 26, and 27 stand rejected as being obvious over Graham et al., U.S. Patent No. 2,424,455, in view of Pazdirek et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,609,433. It is respectfully acknowledged that claims 14, 16-18, and 22-25 have been indicated as being allowable.

The Office Action has again rejected claim 13 as being obvious. Claim 13 depends from allowed claim 24 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 24. Therefore, allowance of claim 13 is respectfully requested.

This amendment amends claims 11 and 27 and adds new claim 28. Claim 11, as amended, patentably defines over Graham et al. and Pazdirek et al., whether taken singularly or in combination.

Amended claim 11 recites that the metal ring (4) has a cylindrical center part (4.1) having inner and outer surfaces. The plastic joint housing (2) abuts against the outer surface of the cylindrical center part (4.1). The inner surface of the cylindrical center part (4.1) has a diameter that corresponds to an outside diameter of the bearing shell (3) and is in abutting engagement with the outside diameter of the bearing shell (3) when the bearing shell is received in the plastic joint housing (2). Thus, according to this language of claim 11, the plastic material of the joint housing only

abuts the outer surface of the cylindrical center part of the metal ring.

On page 6 of the Office Action, with reference to claim 25, the Examiner states that Pazdirek et al. "teaches plastic is required on both sides of the metal ring at a cylindrical portion." Since Pazdirek et al. requires plastic on both sides of the metal ring, Pazdirek et al. teaches away from the invention of claim 11 in which the plastic joint housing abuts only the outer surface of the cylindrical center part of the metal ring and the inner surface of the cylindrical center part engages the bearing shell. Since Pazdirek et al. teaches away from the structure of claim 11, a combination of Graham et al. and Pazdirek et al. fails to meet the requirements for a proper obviousness rejection. Therefore, allowance of claim 11 is respectfully requested.

Claim 26 depends from claim 11 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 27, as amended, recites that the cylindrical center part (4.1) of the metal ring (4) includes inner and outer surfaces. Plastic material of the joint housing (2) engages only the outer surface of the cylindrical center part (4.1). The inner surface of the cylindrical center part (4.1) is free of plastic material from the joint housing (2). Figs. 1 and 2 support the language of amended claim 27. Therefore, the amendment to claim 27 includes no new matter.

Claim 27 patentably defines over Graham et al. and Pazdirek et al. for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 11. Specifically, in claim 27, the

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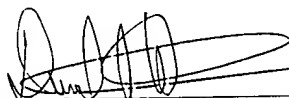
plastic material of the joint housing is located on only one side of the cylindrical center part of the metal ring. As set forth in the Office Action, Pazdirek et al. requires plastic on both sides of the metal ring at the cylindrical portion. Therefore, a combination of Graham et al. and Pazdirek et al. fails to meet the requirements for a proper obviousness rejection and allowance of claim 27 is respectfully requested.

Claim 28 depends from claim 27 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27. Additionally, claim 28 is allowable for the specific limitations of the claim.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified patent application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified patent application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel J. Whitman  
Reg. No. 43,987

TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL,  
& TUMMINO L.L.P.  
526 Superior Avenue, Suite 1111  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1400  
Phone: (216) 621-2234  
Fax: (216) 621-4072  
Customer No.: 26,294